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In the communion of the Churches

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Bose, June 2013

from the Letter to our friends n° 56

At the ecclesial level, the last few months have seen a significant number of close relations with various Christian Churches. The year 2012, in fact, was marked by the death of five patriarchs — **Shenuda III** of the Coptic Church, **Paulos** of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, **Maxim** of Bulgaria, **Ignatius IV** of Antioch, **Torkom**, Armenian patriarch of Jerusalem

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At the beginning of 2013, then, there was sadness at the resignation of pope **Benedict XVI** from his ministry as bishop of Rome, followed then by joy because the Holy Spirit gave a new pastor to the Catholic Church in the person of pope **Francis**. The prior and all the community were especially close with prayer to these Churches during the months of transition and then were able to express through the presence of some brothers, representing br Enzo and the community, at the ceremonies of enthronization their thanksgiving to the Lord for the gift to the Churches of new pastors called to the ministry of unity.

On 16 February br Lino was present at the liturgy of enthronization of the new Greek-Orthodox patriarch of Antioch, **Youhanna X**, as a sign of the love our community bears towards this Church, witness to the Gospel in the midst of Arabic culture and the people of Islam. The new patriarch has been for many years a friend of the prior and the community; a spiritual man, open to ecumenical dialogue, he visited us recently, on the occasion of the meeting in Bose

of the St Ireneus Catholic-Orthodox group of theological dialogue, of which he is co-president. He succeeds patriarch Ignatius IV, pastor and pneumatophore, whose wise paternity, simple friendship, and great passion for Christian unity and for dialogue among men we have experimented and appreciated more than once.

On 24 February br Adalberto and br Salvatore participated in Sofia at the ceremony of enthronization of the new patriarch of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church and metropolitan of Sofia **Neofit**. A man of peace and of dialogue, patriarch Neofit faces the delicate task of guiding the Bulgarian Orthodox Church to reconciliation and peace; only in recent years was the painful schism healed that broke out in this Church in 1992, after the fall of the communist regime.

On 21 March br Guido and br Fabio were present in Canterbury at the ceremony of enthronization of the new archbishop and primate of the Anglican communion, **Justin Welby**. Br Guido had previously taken part at the last public ceremony in Canterbury of archbishop Rowan Williams, the vespers for the feast of St Thomas Becket on 29 December 2012. With that presence our community wished to express all its gratitude for the communion lived with archbishop Rowan over the years, from his first stay in Bose in 2002 in preparation for his enthronization in the see of Canterbury. This communion was nurtured by many repeated marks of closeness, which "opened our eyes and our heart to know and love even better the Anglican way in the following of Christ", as br Enzo publicly recalled during archbishop Rowan's last visit to Bose on 16 September 2012.

On 19 March br Enzo and br Goffredo were present at the liturgy inaugurating the Petrine ministry of pope **Francis**. The following day they were able to greet the pope personally on the occasion of the audience for heads of Churches and religious leaders in the Vatican. They assured pope Francis, as he himself had asked us, that we will accompany him in his ministry with assiduous and fervent prayers to the Lord. The day before, moreover, br Enzo had been able to embrace again in a personal conversation cardinal **Claudio Hummes**, retired archbishop of São Paulo and former president of the Congregation for the Clergy, a good friend of pope Francis and also of our prior and out community; he has stayed in Bose for retreat and for the practice of lectio divina.

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